

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MADRID 06168 050954Z

17  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-10 SAM-01 LAB-04 SIL-01

EB-07 AID-05 SCCT-01 SY-05 /087 W  
----- 107552

O 050900Z SEP 75  
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2911

S E C R E T MADRID 6168

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, SP  
SUBJECT: THE AUTUMN POLITICAL PROSPECT IN SPAIN

1. WITH FRANCO'S EXPECTED RETURN TO MADRID WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS AFTER A SUMMER VACATION IN GALICIA WHERE HIS REPORTED DAILY ACTIVITIES WERE THOSE OF A MAN MANY YEARS HIS JUNIOR, THE POLITICAL LIFE OF SPAIN WILL AGAIN PICK UP MOMENTUM. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT THE MONTH OF AUGUST HAS BEEN WITHOUT POLITICAL INTEREST AS ARIAS WORRIED ABOUT HIS FUTURE, SOLIS EXPLOITED AND BUILT ON HIS PAST, AND JUAN CARLOS CONTINUED TO FRET ABOUT HIS PRESENT. IN ALL OF THIS, FRANCO REMAINED THE RATHER SPHINX-LIKE ARBITER OF SPANISH DESTINY. EVEN FRAGA, WHOSE POLITICAL AMBITIONS HAVE BEEN CURBED BY FRANCO, HAD TO ADMIT TO HIS FRIENDS, AFTER A LONG SESSION WITH FRANCO IN LA CORUNA, THAT THE CHIEF OF STATE SEEMED LUCID, ACUTE AND IN COMMAND. FRAGA'S MAIN COMPLAINT WAS THAT THE GENERATION GAP LOOMED EVEN LARGER.

2. THUS, AS THE SEASON BEGINS, FRANCO STILL REIGNS AND RULES WITH NO MAJOR DECISIONS MADE WITHOUT HIS PLACET. HIS HEALTH AND HIS SUMMER ACTIVITIES WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE NO INTENTION ON HIS PART TO RELINQUISH ANY OF HIS POWERS TO JUAN CARLOS. THERE IS A BODY OF OPINION WHICH I BELIEVE TO BE VALID THAT FRANCO WILL CARRY ON AT LEAST

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 MADRID 06168 050954Z

UNTIL THE SAHARA QUESTION, THE POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS,

US NEGOTIATIONS, AND THE PROBLEMS OF LAW AND ORDER HAVE BEEN SETTLED TO HIS SATISFACTION. THOUGH THE PRINCE REMAINS FRUSTRATED, THERE IS SOME REASON TO BELIEVE THAT HE, TOO, WOULD PREFER THAT NONE OF THESE THORNY QUESTIONS BE BEQUEATHED TO HIM UNSETTLED.

3. OBVIOUSLY, WITH FRANCO ABOUT TO BE 83, HE COULD DISAPPEAR SUDDENLY AT ANY TIME, BUT THIS IS WRITTEN IN THE ASSUMPTION THAT HE WILL REMAIN ON FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER SIX MONTHS.

4. I CONTINUE TO HOLD THE VIEW THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF SPANIARDS WOULD LIKE TO SEE A CHANGE AND ARE READY NOW FOR THE SUCCESSION AND A GREATER POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN THE RES PUBLICA. I ALSO CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE VAST MAJORITY HOPES, WITH FINGERS CROSSED, THAT ALL THIS CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED TRANQUILLY AND GRADUALLY, THUS PRESERVING THE BENEFITS OF THEIR IMPROVED STANDARD OF LIVING. THERE ARE OTHERS, OF COURSE, INCLUDING THE COMMUNISTS AND THE MORE EXTREME GROUPS WHO CARE LESS ABOUT THE GRADUALITY OF CHANGE AND WHO WANT "RUPTURE/ WITH THE SYSTEM (INCLUDING THE PROVISIONS FOR SUCCESSION) AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. ADDED TO THESE LAST GROUPS ARE THE TERRORISTS (BASQUE ETA AND MARXIST-LENINIST FRAP) WHOSE ACTIONS SERVE TO KEEP THE COUNTRY STIRRED UP.

5. THE ARGUMENT BETWEEN THOSE WHO FAVOR A MORE RAPID EVOLUTIONARY PACE AND THOSE WHO BELIEVE THE BRAKES SHOULD BE SEVERELY APPLIED TO THAT PROCESS CONTINUES TO OCCUPY THE CENTER OF THE POLITICAL STAGE. THE COMMENDABLE, ALTHOUGH NOT PARTICULARLY BOLD LIBERALIZING EFFORTS OF ARIAS HAVE GIVEN WAY TO THE ARTFUL POLITICAL WEAVING AND DODGING OF MINISTER OF THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT SOLIS. THE LATTER, IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER LIKE-MINDED ELEMENTS (RODRIGUEZ DE VALCARCEL, FOR ONE), HAVE MANIPULATED THE ASSOCIATION PROCESS TO PLACE IT MORE THAN EVER UNDER THE PROTECTIVE CUSTODY OF THE MOVEMENT. THIS, IN TURN, HAS SCARED OFF AT LEAST FOR THE PRESENT ELEMENTS SUCH AS FRAGA, PIO CABANILLAS, OREJA (WHO ARE ATTEMPTING TO DO THEIR OWN THING) AND SILVA MUNOZ AND MONREAL LUQUE (WHO ARE WORKING TO BUILD UP A

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 MADRID 06168 050954Z

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC "PARTY" WITHIN THE SYSTEM) THE ASSOCIATIONS, THE LAW ON INCOMPATIBILITY, THE ELECTION OF MUNICIPAL COUNCILS, THE PROROGATION OF THE CORTES TO HOLD ELECTIONS NEXT MARCH, AND THE FRENETIC ACTIVITY OF MINISTER SOLIS HAVE ATTRACTED LITTLE INTEREST AMONGST THE SPANISH PEOPLE.

6. MORE INTERESTING, BUT MORE DISTURBING, ARE THE

SIGNS OF FERMENT WITHIN THE MILITARY. AND YET, IT IS ONLY NATURAL THAT AMONGST THE YOUNGER OFFICERS (AND BY OUR STANDARDS, CAPTAINS AND MAJORS HERE ARE NOT SO YOUNG) THERE SHOULD BE AN INCREASING INTEREST IN THE FUTURE OF THEIR COUNTRY. FRANCO IS NOT ETERNAL AND THE YOUNGER OFFICERS BELIEVE THAT THEY, LIKE SO MANY FELLOW SPANIARDS, HAVE A STAKE IN WHAT COMES NEXT. I VERY MUCH DOUBT THAT THE RECENT ARRESTS INDICATE SERIOUS UNREST IN THE ARMED FORCES, BUT WHAT THEY DO SUGGEST IS THAT IF FRANCO AND HIS AGING MILITARY HIERARCHY DO NOT HANDLE THE PROBLEM WITH GREAT SENSITIVITY, THE ARMY (INDEED THE ARMED FORCES) COULD BECOME AN INCREASING POINT OF PRESSURE FOR CHANGE.

7. WHILE THE LABOR SCENE HAS REMAINED TRANQUIL DURING THE SUMMER, I FULLY ANTICIPATE THAT THE FALL WILL PRODUCE AN INCREASING AREA OF CONFLICT AS THE RESULTS OF THE SYNDICAL ELECTIONS SHOW THEIR EFFECTS IN LABOR CONTRACT RENEWALS. A NUMBER OF ENTERPRISES HAVE ALREADY EXPRESSED THEIR CONCERN ABOUT A "HOT AUTUMN".

8. WHILE TERRORISM MAY BE SOMEWHAT DISCOURAGED BY THE ANTI-TERRORIST DECREE (WHOSE OBJECTIVE IS BY NO MEANS REJECTED BY THE MAJORITY OF THE SPANIARDS), NONETHELESS THE FACT THAT THIS DECREE IS THE GOVERNMENT'S MOST IMPORTANT ACTION IN RECENT MONTHS HAS NOT BEEN IGNORED. MOREOVER, THERE IS A CONCERN AMONGST THE LIBERALIZERS THAT THE DECREE MAY ALSO BE USED HANDILY AGAINST PRESS AND PERSONAL LIBERTIES. WE HAVE NOTED THAT IN RECENT WEEKS, EVEN BEFORE THE NEW DECREE, THE GOVERNMENT HAS STEPPED UP ITS REPRESSIVE ACTIONS AGAINST THE PRESS (PARTICULARLY WEEKLIES) AND AGAINST MEETINGS AND RALLIES NOT TO THE GOVERNMENT'S LIKING.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 MADRID 06168 050954Z

9. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE HOPES FOR ARIAS' BRAND OF LIBERALIZATION (WHICH IN ANY EVENT WOULD NEVER HAVE WON ANY PRIZES FOR AUDACITY) HAVE GIVEN WAY FOR THE TIME BEING TO THE REALIZATION THAT WHILE SOME STEPS ARE BEING TAKEN TOWARD GREATER POPULAR PARTICIPATION, THEY ARE GRUDGING AND BASED ON THE CONCEPT THAT TOO MUCH TINKERING WITH THE SYSTEM WILL BE CATASTROPHIC. THIS IS VERY CLOSE TO THE "BUNKER" PHILOSOPHY THAT IS ATTRIBUTED TO THE REALLY DIE-HARD FRANQUISTAS.

10. MY OWN VIEW IS THAT THE REGIME HAS THE POWER AND THE WILL TO KEEP A VERY STERN HAND ON THE HELM AND THAT NO CRIPPLING, DISTURBANCES WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. AT THE SAME TIME, THE SENSE OF FRUSTRATION WILL GROW AND THE PRESSURES WHICH ARE BUILDING UP IN VARIOUS SECTORS

OF SPANISH SOCIETY, INCLUDING NOT ONLY THOSE ALREADY  
MENTIONED BUT UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AS WELL, WILL  
BECOME INCREASINGLY MENACING TO THE ORDERLY SUCCESSION  
OF JUAN CARLOS AS KING, AND TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A  
DEMOCRATIC AND STABLE POST-FRANCO SPAIN.  
STABLER

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLITICAL SITUATION, POLITICAL LEADERS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 05 SEP 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** greeneet  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975MADRID06168  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750307-0461  
**From:** MADRID  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750980/aaaacswt.tel  
**Line Count:** 175  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** greeneet  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 17 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <17 JUN 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <29 OCT 2003 by greeneet>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** THE AUTUMN POLITICAL PROSPECT IN SPAIN  
**TAGS:** PFOR, SP  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006